DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 281 832 SP 028 775

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TITLE A Competency Analysis of Recreational Sports Personnel in Selected Institutional Settings.
PUB DATE [87]
NOTE 9p.; Excerpt from author's doctoral thesis. Funded in part by a research grant from the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Community Recreation Programs; Competency Based Education; Curriculum Development; *Employment Opportunities; Military Organizations; *Professional Personnel; *Recreational Activities
IDENTIFIERS *Recreation Occupations

ABSTRACT

This study sought: (1) to determine and analyze the competencies needed by professional levels of recreational sports personnel in selected institutional settings; (2) to compare the competencies and differentiate among the professional levels and settings; and (3) to evaluate the employment market of the subpopulation and project these needs for a 3-year time period. A survey instrument was developed to determine the importance of competencies at three different professional levels (entry, supervisor, director), the employment market, and general information. A questionnaire was sent to a random sample of 300 recreational sport administrators in three institutional settings: military, municipal, and educational. A total of 152 usable questionnaires were returned. The first section of the questionnaire asked for general background information. In the second section, respondents were asked to list present and future employment opportunities based on the entry, middle, and top management descriptions within their institutions. The third section consisted of the "Competency Analysis," in which respondents were asked to rate the importance of 112 randomly presented competency statements in the three professional levels. The final section consisted of four questions concerning whether the respondent favored undergraduate and graduate preparation, continuing education, and inservice training in recreational sports. Responses are presented in tables. Some suggestions are made for planning curriculum for recreational personnel. (JD)

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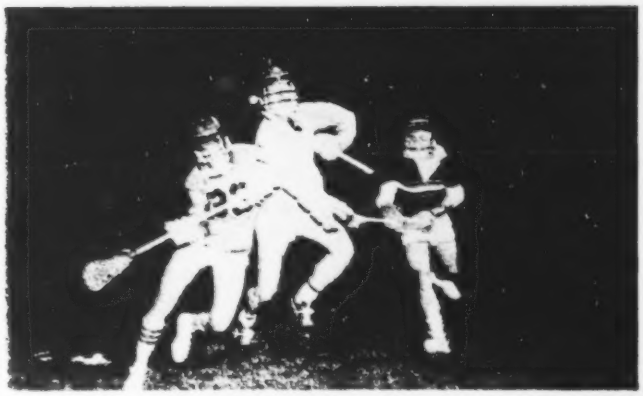
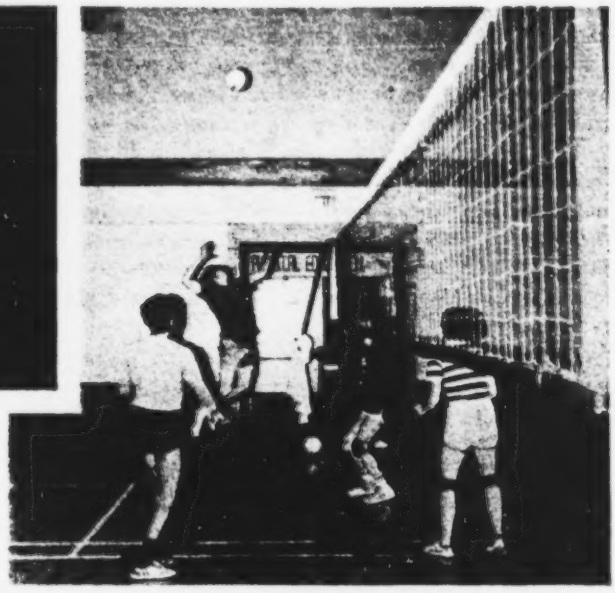
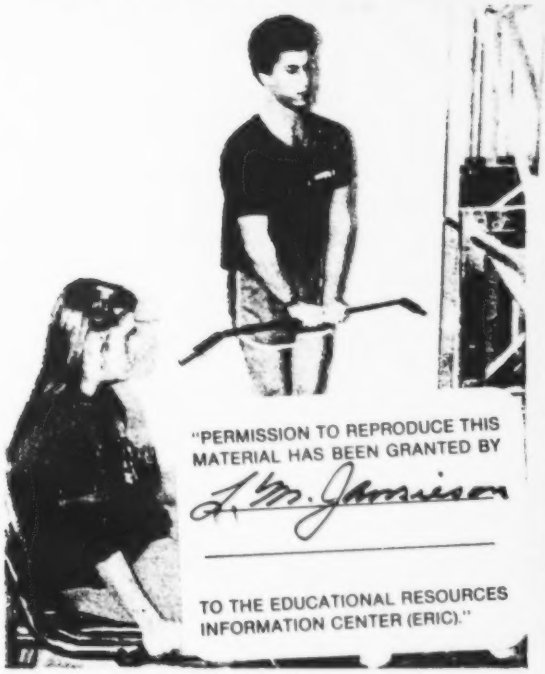
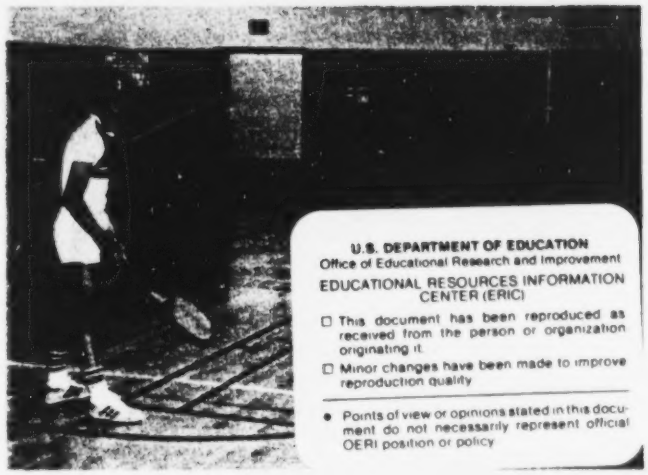
Research Report

A Competency Analysis Of Recreational Sports Personnel In Selected Institutional Settings









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A doctoral study funded in part by a research grant from the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association.

SP 028 775

A Competency Analysis Of Recreational Sports Personnel In Selected Institutional Settings

By Lynn M. Jamieson, Re. D.[1]

INTRODUCTION

A profession is recognized in part by the body of knowledge it relates and in part by the appropriate standards that evolve to support this knowledge base. These two of several criteria inherent in recognized professions provide the framework within which personnel may function and contribute to the growth of this theoretical base. It is the identification of this knowledge that is imperative in order to provide the means to educate those who elect to become professionals in a chosen field.

Recreational sports, as a separately identifiable discipline, is achieving some status as a profession as demands for programs in all settings create a need to identify a knowledge base and to develop standards. Its prevailing distinction as solely an interdisciplinary field within physical education and recreation has been changing as the demand for specialized leadership increases with overwhelming increases in participation. While traditional professional preparation for this field has existed, for the most part, in physical education curriculums, such preparatory bases may be inadequate in preparing a student for those competencies needed in an increased number of recreational sports environments.

The movement towards increased accountability in instruction through competency-based education has brought about the development of knowledge statements that may be expressed as learning behaviors for measurement purposes. Such competencies may be generally accepted by those who practice in the field and then be available in undergraduate and graduate curriculums.

Those who elect to become a part of the interdisciplinary field of recreational sports should be aware of the competencies needed in the field prior to entry.

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OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were threefold. The first was to determine and analyze the competencies needed by professional levels of recreational sports personnel in selected institutional settings. This would provide a base for a competency-based approach to undergraduate and graduate professional preparation. The second was to compare the competencies and differentiate among the professional levels and settings. The third was to evaluate the employment market of the subpopulation and project these needs for a three year time period. Supplementary objectives not germaine to the study were to determine a profile of the respondent in terms of demographic information and interest in professional preparation in recreational sports.

To achieve these objectives, a survey instrument was developed to determine the importance of competencies at different professional levels, the employment market and the general information.

METHODOLOGY

A mail questionnaire was chosen as the method for collecting the data due to the comprehensiveness of the content. The questionnaire was designed, for the most part, to elicit a numerical or short answer response.

The population was a random sample of 300 recreational sport administrators in three institutional settings: military, municipal, and educational. To further delineate the study, subpopulations were selected on the basis of the potential to have three professional levels employed at the institution. Therefore, the three subpopulations included Army bases around the world, municipal programs in cities with populations of 50,000 and over, and four-year educational institutions with enrollments of 9,000 and over. A disproportionate stratification procedure using variable sampling fractions was used in drawing from the subpopulations in order to draw 100 from each.

The survey was mailed to the person chiefly concerned with recreational sports at the institution. The cover letter was addressed to the Recreational Sports Director and explained the objectives of the study, its potential value, and the importance in responding to the questionnaire. Respondents were given a stamped, self-addressed envelope to ensure a response. A follow-up card was sent approximately two weeks later to those who had not responded. Finally, a second questionnaire coded accordingly, was sent three weeks after the first to those who had not responded.

Some of the questionnaires were returned as undeliverable. A total of 152 usable questionnaires were returned resulting in a response rate of 50.6%.

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit general or background information from the respondent, i.e. title of position.

The second section of the questionnaire provided a *Potential Employment Matrix* in which respondents were to list present and future employment opportunities based upon entry, middle and top management descriptions within their institution.

The third section of the questionnaire consisted of the *Competency Analysis* in which the respondents were asked to rate the importance of 112 randomly presented competency statements in each of three professional levels:

> **Level I** — Entry level leadership position, activity speciality fact-to-face leader.
> **Level II** — Supervisor, middle management position, coordinator, supervisor, programmer.
> **Level III** — Director or assistant director of recreational sports, administrator, activities director, sports director, recreational sports manager.

The scale consisted of NA (not applicable) to 3. The "Not Applicable" was considered a zero (0). The competency statements were developed through a jury of 12 experts, four from each subpopulation. The experts were presented with the competency statements and grouped according to 12 major groupings: Business Procedures, Communications, Facility/Maintenance, Governance, Legality, Management Techniques, Officiating, Philosophy, Programming Techniques, Research, Safety/Accident Prevention, Science.

They rated the statements according to a five point scale. Only statements with a criterion score of 3.0 or above were included in this section. The final questionnaire did not include the major competency group titles shown above.

The fourth and last section consisted of four *General Inquiry* questions concerning whether the respondent favored undergraduate and graduate preparation, continuing education and in-service training in recreational sports.

In the initial instructions of the questionnaire respondents were given the following operational definitions of recreational sports due to a universal vagueness of terminology in this area.

Recreational Sports:	Competitive activity in game form engaged in during leisure.
Informal Sports:	Self directed competitive activities in game form.
Intramural Sports:	Structure, competitive activity in game form with groups within best setting.
Extramural Sports:	Structured competitive activities in game form that are organized with groups outside of local setting.
Club Sports:	Groups organized because of a common interest in competitive activity in game form.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY DATA

Profile of the Respondent. Table 1 indicates general information concerning the type of person responding to the questionnaire with regard to title, sex, age, education, major and experience. It appeared that the typical respondent was a top-management professional, male, 38 years old, with a bachelor's degree in either physical education or recreation. The respondent had an average of 6⅓ years in the present position and 12⅓ years in recreational sports.

Potential Employment. Table 2 shows the current and projected employment possibilities in the military, municipal, and educational settings surveyed.

Due to the random selection of subpopulations, it was possible to project the anticipated employment possibilities over the next three years that involved the total population. The following formula was used:

$$\frac{T = \text{Total Responses}}{N = \text{Number of Responses}} = P$$

$P \times T_2 = \text{Projection}$

$T_2 = \text{Total Number Available Before Sample Was Drawn}$

It was shown that a total number of 1387 positions were anticipated with 392 projected for military, 650 for municipal and 303 for educational.

It was found that many entry-level positions were held by part-time personnel. The totals represented indicated only full-time positions as requested.

Competency Analysis. The major portion of the Recreational Sports Competency Analysis questionnaire was concerned with two areas. 1) the establishment of rankings of competency statements for entry, middle and top management levels of recreational sports personnel, and 2) a statistical analysis of significant differences in professional levels and institutional settings.

First, competency statements were analyzed according to a ranking of mean scores for each professional level (I, II, III). All competencies with scores of 2.000 and above were considered of average and above average importance to those respective institutional settings. Tables 3, 4 and 5 show the ranking of the top 20 competency statements by mean score according to professional levels. Tables 6, 7 and 8 show a ranking of competency (or curriculum) areas by professional level. The tables show the grouping of competency statements that had a criterion score of 2.000 and above into the twelve areas. A summary table, Table 9, shows the relative rankings of competency curriculum areas by professional level.

Second, the following two hypotheses were tested by using a univariate analysis of variance for repeated measures:

> Hypothesis 1: There was no significant difference in entry, middle, and top management levels based on the types of competencies needed by recreational sports personnel.
>
> Hypothesis 2: There was no significant difference in the military, municipal, and educational settings based on the types of competencies needed by recreational sports personnel.

Tables 10 and 11 show the significance levels of both hypotheses. It was found that no significant difference existed between settings. There were significant differences in professional levels in the competencies required at each of three management levels.

Of the 152 questionnaires, 136 were used for this study. Those not used were discarded due to failure to fill out responses for all three levels. A biomedical statistical package (BMD P2V) program was used for analysis. This program was designed to deal with a grouping factor (three institutional settings) and a repeated measure trial real factor (three professional levels). The dependent variables were 12 curriculum areas grouped from the 112 competency statements. The significance level was reset from .05 to .01 to reduce the possiblity of a Type I error. This program automatically adjusted for unequal cells by partitioning the degrees of freedom to account for the number of responses for such settings (35-46-55). This program was appropriate for design needs of hypothesis testing by allowing for analysis of a large number of cases.

In analyzing where the significant differences occurred, among professional levels an interpretation scale was used dealing with mean scores of 136 uses. The analysis was made on six areas only as six areas were significant with interaction. Generally, the significant differences were between Levels II and I and III.

General Inquiry. The final portion of the questionnaire dealt with a yes-no response to the following questions:

1. Do you believe that there should be specific undergraduate preparation of recreational sports professionals?
2. Do you believe that there should be specific graduate preparation of recreational sports professionals?
3. Do you believe that there should be continuing education programs for recreational sports professionals?
4. Do you believe that there should be in-service training programs for recreational sports professionals?

Table 12 shows the general response to those questions. Respondents favored undergraduate and graduate preparation, continuing education and in-service training in recreational sports.

CONCLUSION

The study was conducted on the premise that there was a need to determine the competencies needed by recreational sports personnel in performing the duties at the entry, middle, and top management positions. It may be concluded that the competencies determined at three professional levels may form the base for undergraduate and graduate preparation of the recreational sports specialist.

Another factor is that it appears that there is an identifiable body of knowledge for recreational sports personnel regardless of the institutional settings surveyed. It is therefore, important that curriculum planners be sensitive to differences in professional levels, but not settings when preparing the recreational sports specialist.

A final conclusion that may be drawn is that there is a potential job market available in the settings surveyed and employers appear generally favorable toward professional development in the field.

It is important to note that additional study of this nature should be conducted in a commercial-private, quasi public, and other subpopulations not represented in this study.

Curriculum planners may use this data as a guide for planning undergraduate and graduate courses. It was the intent of this study to serve as a beginning in focussing on the body of knowledge inherent in the training of recreational sports specialists as this fulfills one of several criteria of a profession.

Table 1
Profile of the Respondent

TITLE	LEVEL III DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SUPERINTENDENT	71.1%
SEX	MALE	88.2%
AGE	AVERAGE	38.3
EDUCATION	BA/BS	43.9%
	MA/MS	38.5%
	DOCTORATE	8.1%
MAJOR	MUNICIPAL	RECREATION
	EDUCATIONAL	PHYSICAL EDUCATION
	MILITARY	PHYSICAL EDUCATION
EXPERIENCE	PRESENT POSITION	AVERAGE YEARS 6.37
	RECREATIONAL SPORTS	AVERAGE YEARS 12.37

Table 2

POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT
Job Projections

	Military n = 39 M = 158			Municipal n = 51 M = 414			Educational n = 62 M = 204			Total n = 152 M = 776		
Level	n	n/		n	n/		n	n/		n	n/	
I (Entry)	54	1.38	218	62	1.22	503	72	1.16	184	188	1.24	905
II (Mid)	27	.69	109	20	.39	106	34	.55	115	81	.53	330
III (Top)	16	.41	65	5	.98	41	13	21.00	46	34	22.70	152
Total	97	2.49	392	87	1.71	650	119	1.92	345	303	1.99	1387

n = actual positions anticipated
n/ = number of positions/agency
Projection = total projected for entire subpopulation

Table 3
Entry Level (I)
Rankings of Top Twenty Competency Statements

Competency Statement	Curriculum Area	Rank	$\bar{x}$ Score*
Recognizes safety hazards which cause injury	Safety/accident prevention	1	2.587
Knows basic recreational sports terminology	Philosophy	2	2.576
Identifies and encourages participants for programs	Governance	3	2.530
Recognizes various factors that lead to accidents	Safety/accident prevention	4	2.514
Understands specific risks of sports activity	Safety/accident prevention	5	2.481
Observes and supervises recreational sports participants	Programming techniques	6	2.467
Exhibits practical experience in officiating	Officiating	7	2.422
Handles player misconduct in game environment	Officiating	8	2.421
Reports maintenance needs of facilities and equipment	Facility/maintenance	9	2.393
Understands symptoms of injuries	Safety/accident prevention	10	2.391
Ensures safety through equipment maintenance	Safety/accident prevention	11	2.378
Knows levels of competition in sport	Science	12	2.326
Possesses necessary certification in first aid	Safety/accident prevention	13	2.319
Maintains effective communications with public	Communications	14	2.304
Knowledge of administration of a facility reservation system	Facility/maintenance	15	2.289
Understands theories of competitive and cooperative play	Philosophy	16	2.275
Knows procedures for dealing with recognition of participants	Programming techniques	17	2.255
Understands procedures for settling protests	Governance	18	2.252
Conducts routine inspections of facilities and equipment	Facility/maintenance	19	2.250
Utilizes effective decision making skills	Management techniques	20	2.243

Table 4
Middle Level (II)
Rankings of Top Twenty Competency Standards

Competency Statement	Curriculum Area	Rank	$\bar{x}$ Score*
Recognizes safety hazards which cause injury	Safety/accident prevention	1	2.788
Utilizes effective decision-making skills	Management techniques	2	2.716
Demonstrates ability to schedule tournaments, leagues and meets	Programming techniques	3	2.710
Maintains effective communications with the public	Communications	4	2.700
Identifies and encourages participants for programs		5	2.672
Maintains effective communications with staff	Communications	6	2.671
Knows basic recreational sport terminology	Philosophy	7	2.669
Understands procedures for settling protests	Governance	8	2.662
Establishes supervisory controls that prevent participant misuse of a facility	Governance	9	2.650
Understands specific risks of sport activity	Safety/accident prevention	10	2.626
Recognizes various factors that lead to accidents	Safety/accident prevention	11	2.620
Conducts and investigates disciplinary action, accidents, game protests, and eligibility status reports	Governance	12	2.610
Reports maintenance needs of facilities and equipment	Facility/maintenance	13	2.597
Understands the broad spectrum of recreational sports participants	Philosophy	14	2.567
Understands leadership techniques operational in recreational sports	Philosophy	15	2.562
Develops and maintains procedures for postponements and rescheduling	Programming techniques	16	2.547
Identifies and utilizes procedures to regulate the conduct of spectators and participants	Governance	17	2.543
Knows levels of competition in sport	Science	18	2.336
Knows procedures for dealing with recognition of participants	Programming techniques	19	2.532
Understands the theories of cooperative and competitive play	Philosophy	20	2.521

*Rating Scale:
0 = Not applicable
1 = Below average importance
2 = Average importance
3 = Above average importance

Table 5
Top Level (III)
Rankings of Top Twenty Competency Statements

Competency Statement	Curriculum Area	Rank	$\bar{x}$ Score*
Utilizes effective decision-making skills	Management techniques	1	2.891
Prepares and defends a budget proposal	Business procedures	2	2.879
Examines and analyzes a budget	Business procedures	3	2.872
Maintains effective communications with public	Communications	4	2.823
Maintains effective communications with staff	Communications	5	2.810
Prepares administrative guidelines for programming	Programming techniques	6	2.772
Recognizes the philosophical values of recreational sports to the individual	Philosophy	7	2.765
Identifies sources of income for budget	Business procedure	8	2.764
Comprehends legal implications in recreational sports	Legality	9	2.738
Coordinates interagency cooperation	Communications	10	2.736
Identifies and applies affirmative action guidelines to personnel and programming	Legality	11	2.730
Applies purchasing policies and procedures	Business procedures	12	2.728
Understands the broad spectrum of recreational sports opportunities	Philosophy	13	2.716
Establishes preventative measures against negligance	Legality	14	2.712
Utilizes time management techniques	Management techniques	15	2.706
Establishes procedures reflecting fair treatment of staff and participants	Legality	16	2.694
Prepares organizational guidelines for staffing and programming	Business procedures	17	2.687
Recognizes safety hazards which cause injury	Safety/safety procedures	18	2.678
Participates in short and long range facility development	Facility/maintenance	19	2.671
Understands a philosophical basis of recreational sports	Philosophy	20	2.669

*Rating Scale:
0 = Not applicable
1 = Below average importance
2 = Average importance
3 = Above average importance

Table 6

Competency Area Ranking, Level I

Rank	Competency Area
1	Safety/Accident Prevention
2	Programming Techniques
3	Science
4	Philosophical Foundations
5	Governance
6	Facility/Maintenance
7	Communications
8	Officiating
9	Management Techniques
10	Business Procedures
11	Legality
12	Research

Table 7

Competency Area Ranking, Level II

Rank	Competency Area
1	Programming Techniques
2	Management Techniques
3	Safety/Accident Prevention
4	Governance
5	Philosophical Foundations
6	Facility/Maintenance
7	Officiating
8	Science
9	Business Procedures
10	Communications
11	Research
12	Legality

Table 8
Competency Area Ranking, Level III

Rank	Competency Area
1	Management Techniques
2	Business Procedures
3	Legality
4	Governance
5	Safety/Accident Prevention
6	Programming Techniques
7	Facility/Maintenance
8	Philosophical Foundations
9	Research
10	Communications
11	Science
12	Officiating

Table 9
Summary of Competency Statements by Curriculum Area
According to Level

	Levels		
	I	II	III
Curriculum Area	N	N	N
Business Procedures	1	6	9
Communications	1	6	6
Facility/Maintenance	4	8	8
Governance	4	9	8
Legality	0	4	9
Management Techniques	1	11	11
Officiating	2	7	0
Programming Techniques	6	14	8
Philosophy	5	8	8
Science	5	7	5
Safety/Accident Prevention	8	10	8
Research	0	4	7

Table 10

χ Levels for Institutional Settings Based on Curriculum Areas

Curriculum Areas	
Business Procedures	.0583
Communications	.3441
Facility/Maintenance	.0449
Governance	.6865
Legality	.9350
Management Techniques	.0993
Officiating	.9100
Philosophy	.3326
Programming Techniques	.6939
Research	.0673
Safety/Accident Prevention	.4359
Science	.8332

*$p \leq .01$

Table 11

χ Levels of Professional Levels Based on Curriculum Areas

Curriculum Areas	Level	Interaction
Business Procedures	.0000*	.0213
Communications	.0000*	.0124
Facility/Maintenance	.0000*	.0000 *
Governance	.0000*	.0916
Legality	.0000*	.0263
Management Techniques	.0093*	.0042 *
Officiating	.0000*	.0764
Philosophy	.0000*	.0000 *
Programming Techniques	.0000*	.00001*
Research	.0000*	.0017 *
Safety/Accident Prevention	.0030*	.0547
Science	.0001*	.0045 *

* $p = .01$

Table 12
Responses to Need for Professional Development**

Institutional Setting	Undergraduate		Graduate		Continuing Education		In-service Training	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Municipal	40	9	31	19	48	3	48	2
Military	53	9	58	4	58	4	57	3
Municipal	32	6	27	12	37	1	38	0
TOTAL	125	24	116	35	143	8	143	5

**Unequal numbers due to lack of total responses